THE
Strong Man Armed
CAST OUT,
And his GOODS SPOILED:
Or, the Poor Man ſitting at Jeſus's Feet clothed, and in his Right Mind.

Being a True Convert's Teſtimony of the Power of the Lord, in turning the Soul from Darkneſs to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God.

Wherein is clearly manifeſted, that there is Light in every Man and Woman, which diſcovers their Conditions, bears a faithful Teſtimony againſt Sin, is the Reprover of all Unbelief and Unrighteouſneſs both in Heart and Life, and is the Mighty Power of God for Salvation to all that believe in it and obey it.

And herein it is evidently proved, That they are none of the Miniſters of Chriſt that Oppoſe this Doctrine; with one infallible Character of the Real Goſpel-Miniſters; and moſt of the weighty Objections anſwered.

Formerly given forth in Writing unto my Relations and Acquaintance, the Profeſſors, called *Independents*, in *Nottingham-ſhire*; declaring the juſt Cauſe of my leaving their Aſſemblies. Together with a tender Invitation to all the Honeſt-hearted, to come out of their *dead Forms*, and walk in the *Light of the Lord*.

By James Jackſon, *formerly a Pariſh Prieſt, and a Teacher amongſt the* Independents; *and now through the exceeding Riches of God's Love, am made willing to take up the Daily Croſs, and walk with the deſpiſed Followers of the Lamb, in Scorn called* Quakers.

This is a Marvelous Thing, O ye Prieſts, and Profeſſors, that ye know not whence he is and yet he hath opened mine Eyes. Was it ever known, that ever any man opened the Eyes of one that was born blind?

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THE Strong Man Armed CAST OUT, And His Goods Spoiled, &c.

IN the time of my greateſt Pollution and Iniquity, while I fulfilled the Luſts of the Fleſh with Greedineſs, for many years before that Change and Reformation was diſcerned in me at which ye rejoyced, even in the worſt of my time; I teſtifie in the Preſence of the Lord, that then I met with real and immediate Reproofs, Rebukes and Convictions from ſomething that did often Awaken, Judge and Condemn me in my own Conſcience, but knew not what it was, nor whence it came; and becauſe Iniquity was riſen in me to an exceeding maſterleſs height, theſe Rebukes which I know were from a contrary Principle to Sin, prevailed not, although at ſome times they were as Powerful and Terrible as the Hand-Writing upon the Wall before *Belſhazzer*, whereby my Countenance hath been changed, my Thoughts troubled, that the Joynts of my Loins were loſed, and my Knees

Anſw. [illegible] another; then thought I to redreſs this Sorrow meaſure of Ligh[illegible]nd Pleaſant Company, eſſaying to divert is well known to [illegible]y by outward Jollaty, as Drinking, Gameſition and Con[illegible]but thoſe Diverſions were unable to ſtill and which I decla[illegible]ſtuous Surging Waves, and were no more effe[illegible] Brethren.e Wound of my Sin-ſmitten Conſcience, then if a man ſhould endeavour to quench Fire by pouring Oyl thereon; for I found by woful Experience, that theſe unwarrantable Courſes

encreased the Flame, and added yet more Weight to the first Burden: Then have I many times solemnly vowed, promised and resolved, To break off and cease from all Ungodly Practices; and in keeping and observing these Covenants I have found some Ease and Quietness for a time; but as soon as new Sins were committed, then arose fresh Occasions of Sorrow, Trouble and Terror; and after this manner I continued many years, until the Lord was pleased of his infinite Wisdom and Faithfulness to hedge up my Way with Remarkable and Extraordinary Providences, blasting all Purposes and Designs, and caused Afflictions, Losses and Disappointments to come upon my outward Estate, Horror and Perplexity upon my Soul, a most Violent and Raging Feaver upon my Body, and at the same time above an Hundred Miles from all Relations, Friends and Kindred; at which time, being in a most Wretched, Deplorable and Succourless Condition, sinn'd my self almost out of all the Comforts of this Life, and any Hope of Interest in a better; being under this great Distress, and cast out to the loathing of my own Person, and had all my Sins set in order before me, whereupon I was forced seriously to consider my Wayes, and found no place to escape the Wrath of the Highly-provoked God; at which time I had no Benefit of any Outward Help, Teaching or Counsel; but he, who before had been my Reprover, was then my only Teacher, who sealed Instruction upon my Soul, whose Voice I heard, which did shake and shake the Heavens, and the Earth also; and caused me to cry out, *Lord, What wouldest thou have me to do?* And being brought to the Foot of God, could truly say, *Speak now Lord, for thy Servant heareth:* And abiding in this broken and shattered State, I clearly felt the Judgment of the Lord powerfully at work in my So[illegible] an Ax at the Root of the Tree, and as a Refiner's F[illegible] Life and Power of Sin was slain, subdued and [illegible] in my Will and Affections; then was the Lo[illegible] whom I had pierced; the New Birth Discern[illegible] after God in true Holiness; and the Immortal, [illegible] of the Eternal God, which ever before had bee[illegible] trodden under and held in Bondage, arose; yea, the Tender Plant of his own Right Hand sprung up in me, panting and vehemently breathing after, and never since could be satisfied but with

with his Living Preſence. Behold! theſe things worketh the Lord oftentimes with men, looking upon men; And if any ſay, *I have ſinned, and perverted that which is Right, and it profited me not*, he will deliver his Soul from going into the Pit, and his Life ſhall ſee the Light. And thisis the Sum of the Confeſſion which I was not aſhamed to witneſs in your publick Aſſemblies, both at *Nottingham* and other places, in the year 1668.

Objection. But it is probable ſome of you will object, ſaying, *After this Change was wrought, thou didſt Joyn to our Aſſemblies, Owned us, Prayed with us, Preached amongſt us, and ſeemed to enjoy Refreſhings and Satisfaction in our Aſſemblies; wherefore then art thou now departed from us, and gone to the* Quakers?

Anſwer 1. Notwithſtanding that great and notable Work begun in my Soul, and in ſome meaſure effected by the Mighty Power of the Lord, yet was there after ſome time a certain Deadneſs, Coldneſs and Darkneſs drawn over me again, occaſioned through Weakneſs, Unwatchfulneſs and Formality, whereby that good Condition was loſt; nevertheleſs I found and felt tender Breathings moving in me, thirſting and ſeeking for renewed Teſtimonies of the Love of God, then in the Simplicity and Uprightneſs of my Heart, not knowing a more likely way to obtain Satisfaction, I joyned to your Society; and can truly affirm (though I now ſee it was no better then ſeeking the Living among the Dead) that the Lord was pleaſed in the Condeſcenſions of his Love, many times to ſtoop down, and reach forth from the openings of his Boſom Refreſhings and Nouriſhment to that tender Babe of his own begetting, yea, while I frequented your Aſſemblies.

Anſw. 2. And as I continued Faithful and Obedient to that meaſure of Light and Knowledge, which was revealed in me, it is well known to all, or the moſt of you, what Cenſures, Oppoſition and Contradiction, both I and the plain Scripture-Truths, which I declared in your Aſſemblies, ſuffered from many of your Brethren, charging me, That I was leading into *Quakeriſm*,

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long before I understood either by word or Writing what the *Quakers* held.

Answ. 3. But however, these Censures occasioned a free and impartial Search into the *Quakers* Principle, Doctrine and Practice; for verily, before I was as much afraid of the *Quakers* as ye can be: But standing single in the Will and Counsel of the Lord, desirous to prove all things and hold fast that which is good, abandoning all Consultations with Flesh, was resolved to cease from Man, and to cleave unto the Truth, as the Lord should reveal and discover the same to me, waiting in this Unbyassed, Unprejudiced and Dis-engaged Frame, examining carefully the Principle, Foundation, Doctrine and Practice of this Despised Holy People, great Clearness and Satisfaction arose in my Soul; for as Face answered Face in a Glass, so were the Truths delivered by them, owned and embraced by the Witness of God in my own Conscience; and the same Spirit, Light, Life and Power, which is manifest in them, I came to feel in a measure in my own Particular: And yet for all this, before I came to any visible Closure with them, I sate down, and counted the Cost, and am made willing freely to endure the Cross, and undergo the World's Reproach and Shame, knowing, that whoever will be Christ's Disciple must deny himself, and take up his Cross daily and follow him.

And truly Friends, the Day of the Lord's Power is come and felt, whereby I am made willing to forsake Fathers and Mothers, Brethren and Sisters, Parsonages and all kind of Ecclesiastical Promotions, Friends Honours, Pleasures, Profits, Houses, Lands, Goods, yea, and Life is self, to follow the Lamb, and fall in with his Interest, as it is only witnessed and embraced by and amongst the Children of Light, by the World called *Quakers*.

Answ. 4. But if it were possible, I desire to make clear to your Satisfaction, that there was sufficient Ground for me; and so there is for you, who have any Tenderness and Breathings in your Souls after the Lord, to separate your selves from the Tents of those Ungodly Men, your Teachers, who are no better then Filthy Dreamers,

Blind

Blind Guides and Belly-Gods, who belch out nothing but Blaſphemies, Lyes, Slanders, Falſe Accuſations and Evil Speeches againſt God and Chriſt, his Wayes, Truth and People; and this I ſee and declare againſt them in the Light: For, verily there is, and I witneſs it, an Honeſt, Gracious, Tender Principle in many of you, called *Independents*, which kindles in you perfect Hatred againſt Sin, and unſatisfied real Breathings and Pantings after the Senſible Living Preſence of the Lord; But your Leaders cauſe you to Err, and ye are ſcattered upon the dark and barren Mountains: And this I teſtifie in the Name of the Living God, That it will be ſo with you while ye follow theſe Wandring Stars, Clouds without Rain, Seducing Spirits, your Paſtors and Teachers, who are Ravening Wolves and Miniſters of Antichriſt, whom ye ought not to receive into your Houſes, nor bid them *God ſpeed*; For,

(1.) They are altogether Ignorant of the True God; and all the Knowledge that theſe men pretend to have of the Deity, is attained by Reading and Hear-ſay; for they will confidently affirm, That *Viſion and Immediate Revelation is ceaſed*: Judge ye therefore what Knowledge theſe men have of God, when the Scriptures ſay, *No man knows the Father but they to whom the Son reveals him.*

(2.) They Reproach and deſpiſe Jeſus Chriſt, the only Son of God, of whom the Scriptures witneſs and teſtifie to be the True Light, *which enlightens every man that comes into the World*: But they are not afraid to ſay, *The Light in every man is but a Natural Light, and at the beſt not able to ſave thoſe who believe in it and obey it.* And to diſcover themſelves more plainly to be the Miniſters of Antichriſt, they are not aſhamed to deny that Chriſt is come in the Fleſh: indeed both they and their Grandmother, the Church of *Rome*, are willing to confeſs that Chriſt *was* come; but the Scripture is plain, That *every Soul that confeſſeth not that Chriſt is come in the Fleſh, the ſame is Antichriſt.*

(3.) They fear not daily to Blaſpheme the Holy Spirit of God; but call it *A Spirit of Deluſion*, and *A Spirit of Error*; and moſt preſumptuouſly ſay of them that are ſanctified, guided, taught and anointed by the Holy Ghoſt, That *they are led by the Spirit of the Devil.*

(4.) They trample under Foot the Blood of the Covenant, counting it a Weak and Unholy Thing, while they impudently affirm, That *the beſt of God's Saints* (yea, if he had no purer Saints then they are) *cannot be free from ſin whilſt they breath upon Earth, when* the *Scriptures* witneſs, *that the Blood of Chriſt cleanſeth from all ſin.*

(5.) They preach another Goſpel: Now the Scripture is plain, That *if any man, or an Angel from Heaven, preach any other Goſpel unto us, then what we have already received, let him be accurſed, Gal.* 1.9. Now how can ye believe that they are Miniſters of the Goſpel, when they know not what the true Goſpel is; For, ſaith Paul, *I certifie unto you, Brethren, that the Goſpel which I preach is not after man; for I neither received it, neither was I taught it of man, but by the Revelation of Jeſus Chriſt*: But your Teachers deny any ſuch Revelation in theſe dayes; wherefore it is hereby evident, that they are Thieves, crept in ſome other wayes, and bring another Goſpel, then that whereof *Paul* was a Miniſter, as he witneſſed to the *Colloſſians*, Chap. 1.23. ſaying, *Be not moved from the Hope of the Goſpel, which ye have heard, and which was preached* IN EVERY CREATURE *under Heaven, whereof I* Paul *am a Miniſter. And this is the Word of Faith which we preach, even Chriſt, the Word, who is in thy Heart and in thy Mouth*, ſaith *Paul, Rom.* 10. which all have heard, and the Sound thereof is gone through the whole World: But theſe men labour to pervert the Goſpel, and turn men from it, ſaying, *That the Light of Chriſt in every man's Conſcience is not the Subſtance of the Goſpel, nor the Power of God to Salvation.*

ἐν πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει
In univerſa creatura.

(6.) They have indeed a Form of Godlineſs, but want the Power; and well for them if that was the worſt: But they magnifie and cry up a Form, and utterly reject, deſpiſe, and deny the Power, which is the immortal Seed, Chriſt Jeſus, the Light within; and from ſuch we are commanded to turn away.

Their Prayers and Sermons are made, contrived, ſtudied and compoſed in their own Time, Wills and Wiſdom; but are Strangers to the Life, Power and Spirit of Prayer: and deny that Chriſt ſpeaks in any; which is evident that he doth not ſpeak in them.

They

They cry up, and plead earneſtly for Water-Baptiſm, which Chriſt never Adminiſtred, Inſtituted or Commanded to be Adminiſtred; and yet they call it Chriſt's Ordinance: Some ſaying, *Without this no Salvation*; and the reſt ſay, *With ſuch as wilfully neglect this, have no Communion*; But if they had ever undergone and felt the Powerful, Lively, Purifying and throughly cleanſing Efficacy of the Spirit's Baptiſm, they would know it ſufficient, without the Help of their Dead, Cold, Idolized Water-Works.

They are greatly affected with that Bread and Wine, which after breathing upon by, the Paſtor, is not Common, but Be-ſainted, and ſo comes to be called the Lord's Supper: It is evident hereby, that they never did eat of that Fleſh which is Bread indeed, nor drink of that Blood which is Drink indeed.

Now it is certain, that all Pictures, Images, Shadows, Reſemblances, Figures and Repreſentations, which any people live in and plead for, do clearly argue, That they are deſtitute of the Power, Life and Subſtance, yea, wholely ignorant of his Living Preſence, in whom is hid all the Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge: And as they believe in one at a great Diſtance from them, out of their View and Knowledge; ſo is it very convenient, they think, to neceſſitate theſe Carnal Ordinances to reduce their unmindful and forgetful Thoughts into more ſerious Remembrance, till he come: And yet theſe men will condemn the *Papiſts*, though they be far ſhort of their Devotion in this very Thing.

And ſo are they ſeen in the Light to be Wolves in Sheep's Cloathing, ravened from the Life and Power of thoſe Saints, whom they are imitating upon the Stage of their Formal Profeſſion.

Wherefore, my dear Frieds, Come out from amongſt them, and be ye ſeparate, leſt ye be drunk with the Wine of their Fornication; For verily, the Lord is riſen to plead his own Cauſe, and be a ſwift Witneſs againſt theſe Sorcerers, who are ſporting themſelves in the day time: And as thoſe Souldiers regarded not a Crucified Jeſus ſo near them, but their Minds were taken up in parting & caſting Lots for his Raiment; ſo theſe men are ſo exerciſed in the Out-ſides of Religion, Ordinances (ſo called) and

Worſhip, that they are not at all concerned with the In-ſide, which is the Life and Power of Godlineſs, even Chriſt within, the Hope of Glory.

Anſw. 5. And Laſtly; As I have plainly declared the Reaſons of my departing from your Aſſemblies, ſo ſhall I witneſs faithfully to the Truth, as it is known and practiſed by the Holy People of God, called *Quakers*, with whom I now walk, and of whom I declare and teſtifie.

Firſt, That they are built and rooted in & upon the Right Foundation, even Chriſt Jeſus, the Lord; who is their Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification and Redemption, in whom alone they are juſtified by Faith, and ſaved.

That Root from whence they receive Life, Nouriſhment, Power and Growth, is the only Foundation of the Prophets and Apoſtles, the Rock of Ages, the Stone which your Builders and their Brethren, the Prieſts, ever rejected, diſallowed and ſet at nought, which is, *Chriſt in us, the Hope of Glory*. Whereupon it is evident that we differ in the Root from all the People in the World, though of ſeveral Forms and Perſwaſions: For plainly, the *Papiſts*, *Prelates*, *Presbyters*, *Baptiſts* and *Independents*, though they all differ in their Forms, Appearances, and Circumſtantial Opinions, yet do they all agree and meet in one and the ſame Faith, Foundation and Root.

The Words, Writings, Declarations and Teſtimonies of the Saints, recorded in Scripture, are the Foundation and Ground of all the Profeſſing People in the World; and all of them being Strangers to that one Spirit that gave forth the Scriptures, are run into ſeveral Sects and Opinions, as they do carnally underſtand and conceive they have Rule and Teaching in the Bible: But however, they will own no other Light, Law, Goſpel, Rule, Revelation and Word of God, but their Bibles. But now this peculiar People, whom the Lord hath gathered from amongſt all the *Babyloniſh* Confuſions and Diviſions under Heaven, are built upon the Foundation of the Prophets and Apoſtles, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being the chief Corner-Stone, in whom all the Building fitly framed together, groweth into an Holy Temple in the Lord.

So

So that these receive immediate Light, Life, Power, Teaching, Guidance, Rules, Refreshings, Revelation, Peace and Satisfaction from that Word which was before the Worlds were made; even that Life, Power, Foundation, Root, Spring and Fountain, in and by which the Holy Prophets and Apostles were Quickened, Enlightened, Anointed, Inspired, and gave forth the Scriptures, which is Christ Jesus, the Word of God, the Power of God, the Son of God, the Light Within, the only Saviour of the World.

2*dly*, Their Faith is the Faith of the Son of God; Jesus Christ is the Author and Finisher of it: It is not a Dead Historical Faith, but the Spirit and Life of Faith, and no less then the Resurrection and Life of the Immortal Seed, Enlightening, Quickening, Reforming and Renewing the whole Man; And this is that Faith by which Sin is subdued, slain and mortified perfectly, the Heart purified, the World conquered, the Soul sanctified, justified and saved perfectly: But the Faith of all others is an Unholy, Dead, Imperfect Faith; it sanctifies but in part (as they say) and so will never save to the uttermost.

3*dly*, Their Knowledge is Spiritual and Experimental, from the immediate Unction of the Holy Ghost; what is known, proceeds not from Hear-say, but divine Revelation: All that are born of the Spirit are taught of God, and need not that any say, *Know the Lord*; for they all know him, from the greatest to the least: This is Life Eternal to know God, who is Light, yea, the Father of Lights; and that the Light within is the Son of God, whom he hath sent; so to know as to live and abide in his Light, is Life Eternal: And this is that Mystery which is hid from the Wise and Prudent, and is revealed unto Babes; for the World by all its Wisdom knows not God, neither doth the Carnal Man (though never so great a Schollar) discern the things of God; for they are Spiritually discerned.

And as Christ was Bodily in the World, and the World knew him not, no, not the great Doctors and Leaders of those several Sects and Religions in that day, as the *Samaritans*, *Herodians*, *Scribes*, *Pharisees* and *Sadducees*, they knew him not; and therefore the man that was born blind wondred, *This is a Marvelous Thing*,

Thing, ſaith he, *that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine Eyes: It was never known that any man opened the Eyes of one that was born blind.*

Even ſo it is now; Chriſt is ſpiritually in the World, and the World knoweth him not; no, not the *Popes*, *Prelates*, *Preſbyters*, *Prieſts* and *Paſtors* of all the Religions in the World, they know him not, but ſay, *It is the Devil*, or at beſt, *but the Light of Nature*; and ſo they know not from whence he is, yet hath he inlightned Thouſands: And it was never known that the *Devil* or *Nature* converted any to the Lord, that have been Naturalized to Sin.

4*thly*, Their Humility, which is the emptying of themſelves of all their own Righteouſneſs, Wills, Wiſdom and Self-Exaltation; and is a real, inward, ſpiritual Abaſement and Subjection to the Life, Power & Kingdom of Chriſt Jeſus, manifeſted in Spirit, ruling and dwelling in their mortal Bodies: And ſo this True, Humble, Meek and Low Frame of Spirit proceeds from their experimental Knowledge of Chriſt's living Preſence in them; whereas they that know God and Chriſt only by Reading and Hear ſay, with a Literal and Hiſtorical Knowledge, they are blown, ſwell'd and puffed up with Airy Notions, Vain Boaſtings and Self-Conceitedneſs.

5*thly*, Their Unity, which conſiſts not only in the Oneneſs of Opinion and Judgment, but proceeds from Unity of Spirit: And their Love one to another is not from a Natural but a Heavenly and Spiritual Principle; It is not the Love of one man to another, but it is the Love of God ſhed abroad in their Hearts, which maketh them all of one Mind, and all ſpeak, write and witneſs the ſame thing: For as the Vital Spirits in the Natural Frame have its Operation through every Member, it makes the Eyes, Ears, Tongue, Hands and Feet, to ſee, hear, ſpeak, work and walk, and yet but one Soul that moves and quickens all through its ſpeedy Entercourſe into every Member and Part of the Body; ſo is it here, the Love, Peace, Concord and Unity amongſt theſe is remarkable; it flows from the Fountain of Love, and influenceth the whole Body, which makes them in all their Wayes, Doctrine and Practice but as One Man: And though but a Poor, Weak, Harm-

leſs,

leſs, Innocent and Inoffenſive People, are rendred through their Unity and Love, as Terrible as an Army with Banners.

6thly, Their Patience is invincible: To them is this Grace given, *Not only to Believe in the Name of Jeſus, but alſo to Suffer for his ſake.* And as the Lord hath made them Bleſſed and Glorious Inſtruments in his Hand to do his Will, ſo hath he made them contented to be perfected through Sufferings: For though the Lord hath been eſpecially preſent with them, yet the World hath been eſpecially againſt them; not for their own ſakes (for they are the only Innocent and Harmleſs People upon Earth) but for Chriſt's ſake in them; yea, becauſe there is more of God among theſe men then others, therefore are they hated of all men, and every where amongſt all Religions evil ſpoken of: for the World moſt hates where there is moſt of God; therefore the Single-hearted may gueſs where there is moſt of God, by obſerving where the greateſt Hatred of the World lies.

7thly, Their Faithfulneſs to the Truth, Wayes and Intereſt of Chriſt; How have they gone up and down in Wearineſs and Labours, in Hunger and Nakedneſs, in Dangers and Deaths, to bear a Faithful Teſtimony againſt the Sin, Vanity, Falſe Worſhip and Abomination of the Times? When did they ſhrink in the leaſt, or turn back from their Duty, when Loſs of Eſtate, Liberty, yea, Danger of Baniſhment attended it? When did they Deny their Maſter or his Commands, or Betray his Intereſt before King or Counſel-Table, Judges, Juſtices or Biſhops, by Subſcribing, Engaging, Swearing, Bowing or Complying to the Wills and Humors of men? Nay, they have witneſſed a Good Confeſſion, and ſpoken of his Teſtimonies before all theſe, and were not aſhamed: When did they meet at Night for fear of being ſeen, or creep in at Back-Doors into Cellars, Holes and ſecret Places to hide themſelves from the Knowledge of the Adverſary? But the time would fail me to ſpeak of their Self-denyal, Temperance, Sobriety, Innocency, Doctrine, Order, Worſhip, their Spirit of Prayer and Watchfulneſs, Holineſs, Righteouſneſs, Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt: The King's Daughter is all Glorious within, and her Rayment is of pure Gold. Therefore in Truth and Sincerity to them I will ſay, *Who is like unto thee, O People, ſaved by the Lord,*

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the Shield of thy Help & the Sword of thy Excellency? Thine Enemies ſhall be found Lyars unto thee, and thou ſhalt tread upon their High Placet.

Yet to make it appear more plain, that this Light within, which indeed is our Principle, is the Truth, and the Mighty Power of God for Salvation to all that believe in it and obey it, will be further manifeſted by its Nature and Effects.

The NATURE *of this Light.*

It is a Living, Immortal, Unchangeable, Undefiled, Righteous and Perfect Principle of pure Holineſs, which never fell, comply'd with, or conſented to any Evil; But hath ever oppoſed and ſtood croſs to the whole corrupt Nature, Will and Affections of faln man: For I know that all *Adam*'s Poſterity are by Nature faln under Guilt, Pollution, Condemnation and Darkneſs. So that the Light I ſpeak of is nothing of Man's Nature, but of the pure Divine Nature, even that Seed promiſed *Gen.* 3. 15. yea, the Son of God, which is ſent into the World, *that whoſoever believe on him ſhould not periſh, but have Eternal Life.*

The EFFECTS *of this Light.*

When Chriſt was upon Earth, *John* ſaw and bare record, *That he was the Lamb of God, which taketh away the Sins of the World*: Yet the Lord ſaid, *A greater Teſtimony have I, then that of* John; *for the Works that I do in my Father's Name, they teſtifie of me*: So ſay we of him now; he is ſpiritually the Light in man, however ſleighted, rejected and undervalued by men; yet is he choſen of God, and pretious, the alone Saviour of the World; and the Works he accompliſhes daily in the Souls and Conſciences of men teſtifie the ſame; wherefore, if his Works be not ſuch as none elſe can do, believe him not.

Effect I. Hereby the Sinner is convinced, judged, reproved and condemned plainly and experimentally, for all the Sins that ever he committeth, of what Kind or Nature ſoever they be: *John* 4.29. *Come* (ſaid the Woman of *Samaria*) *and I will ſhew ye a Man that hath told me all things that ever I did; is not this the Chriſt?*

Effect II.

Effect 2. *The Fear of the Lord*, which *is the Beginning of Wisdom*, is never truly placed in the Heart, till this Principle be witneſſed and owned; for while a Man looks at God and Chriſt at a great Diſtance, circumſcribed in ſome Place beyond the Stars, the Sinner rageth & is confident; but when the Mind & Underſtanding is perſwaded that the Pure, Holy, Righteous, Omnipotent and Omnipreſent Lord God is not only nigh him, but within him alſo, he is then brought into awful Apprehenſion of the moſt High, & forced to cry out with *Job*, *I have heard of thee before by the Hearing of the Ear, but now mine Eyes have ſeen him*: by this Means the Mind is melted into much Tenderneſs and Brokenneſs, and with the Prophet complaineth, *Wo is me; for I am undone*. Now conſider this all ye that deſpiſe the Light within, *This is a Marvelous Thing* (ſaid the Young Man) *that ye know not whence he is, and yet he hath opened my Eyes. ſince the World began was it not heard that any Man opened the Eyes of one that was born Blind.* Joh. 9. 30

Effect 3. Waiting humbly in this pure Dread & Fear of the Lord, Man's Inſufficiency to anſwer the Requirings of the Holy Commandment is diſcerned; but perfect Power and Strength in Chriſt the Light, is diſcovered; for indeed, *in him are hid all the Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge*: and ſtanding up to the Manifeſtation of this Light, the Judgment of the Lord is felt as a *Refiner's Fire*, which throughly purifies, and as *Fullers Soap* that leaves no Spot; then the Soul knows that flaming Sword, which kept faln Man out of Paradiſe; but now diſcerns the new Birth, which bears the Image of the Heavenly Nature; the ſtrong Man armed, which before held Poſſeſſion, Bound, caſting out, and all his Goods ſpoiled by the Powerful Entrance of Chriſt into his Temple.

Effect 4. Waiting and abiding in this *Light* for Counſel and Teaching, the whole Man being emptyed of his own Will and Wiſdom, ſtanding ſingly and purely in the Will of the Lord, ready to be diſpoſed, ordered and guided univerſally by the Light, the Soul now thrives in the Fear and Love of God, bringeth forth the peaceable Fruits of Righteouſneſs, and liveth in that Faith which purifies the Heart, and getteth Victory over the World, Sin and Death.

Theſe Things, with many other which might be mentioned, do make it manifeſt, that whoever deny, deſpiſe and reproach the Light

within,

the Shield of thy Help & the Sword of thy Excellency? Thine Enemies ſhall be found Lyars unto thee, and thou ſhalt tread upon their High Placet.

Yet to make it appear more plain, that this Light within, which indeed is our Principle, is the Truth, and the Mighty Power of God for Salvation to all that believe in it and obey it, will be further manifeſted by its Nature and Effects.

The NATURE *of this Light.*

It is a Living, Immortal, Unchangeable, Undefiled, Righteous and Perfect Principle of pure Holineſs, which never fell, comply'd with, or conſented to any Evil; But hath ever oppoſed and ſtood croſs to the whole corrupt Nature, Will and Affections of faln man: For I know that all *Adam*'s Poſterity are by Nature faln under Guilt, Pollution, Condemnation and Darkneſs. So that the Light I ſpeak of is nothing of Man's Nature, but of the pure Divine Nature, even that Seed promiſed *Gen.* 3.15. yea, the Son of God, which is ſent into the World, *that whoſoever believe on him ſhould not periſh, but have Eternal Life.*

The EFFECTS *of this Light.*

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within, deny God, the Father of Lights, deſpiſe Jeſus Chriſt, the Light & Saviour of the World, and reproach the Holy Spirit which maketh manifeſt and reproveth the Sins of Men: Wherefore all ye Profeſſors that look out for another Saviour, remember the Anſwer of our Lord Jeſus unto *John Baptiſt*, upon the like Account, *Art thou he, or ſhall we look for another? Go* (ſaith Chriſt) *and tell him that ſent you, what you have heard and ſeen; the Blind receive their Sight, the Deaf hear, &c.* Even the ſame in a ſpiritual Senſe may be as really affirmed of the *Light within*; hereby have the Eyes, Ears and Mouthes of the Blind, Deaf and Dumb been opened, the Lame, Lepers and the Dead, cured, cleanſed and quickned, and the Poor, whom none of the Proud, Covetous Clergy (ſo called) regardeth, they by Vertue hereof, have the Everlaſting Goſpel preached unto them; and forever bleſſed are they who are not offended in the *Light*, but love it, believe in it, and obey it in all things.

Luke 7. 21.

Object. 1. *But we are afraid of being deceived; this is a new and ſtrange Doctrine; did ever Chriſt or his Apoſtles bid Men believe and obey the Light within?*

Anſw. 1. Art thou not already deceived? Conſider therefore well thy Condition, if thou art delivered out of the deceived State, in which the greateſt Part of the World yet remains; art thou yet in a ſinful tranſgreſſed Eſtate? *For the Woman being deceived was in the Tranſgreſſion*, 1 Tim. 2. 14.

Anſw. 2. We that believe and abide in the Light, know that we are not deceived; neither ſeek we to deceive any, neither fear we any deceiving us: though indeed while we walked in the Imaginations of our own deceitful Hearts, and warmed our ſelves by the Sparks of our own kindling, that then as the Serpent beguiled *Eve* through his Subtilty, ſo our Minds were corrupted from the Simplicity that is in Jeſus; in which State we ſee many yet to ſtand whom the Lord will undeceive in his own Time; *But Evil Men and Seducers will wax worſe, deceiving and being deceived.*

Anſw. 3. Never fear Deceit in ſuch who turn [illegible] the *Light*, whereby ye may diſcern betwixt Good and Bad, [illegible]nd Falſhood; plainly, I would much fear that he had a [illegible] cheat me, who leads into the *Dark*, and denyes the Benefit [illegible]ight.

4.

Answ. 4. Search with Freedom, and examine throughly this Doctrine, condemn it not unheard, speak not Evil of any Thing unknown; for so mayst thou soon condemn the Innocent, and make thy self guilty.

Answ. 5. Understand fully what we hold before thou contend against us, lest if thou want this Patience and Wisdom, thou oppose not so much our Judgment as thy own Conceit; better it is to hear a Man's Mind with Meekness, then hastily to guess at it.

Answ. 6. Be not wedded to thy own Opinion, nor Wise in thy own Conceit, so as to build upon thy own or other Mens Judgments, and rest satisfied therein, because it is strengthned by Multitude, Custom and Antiquity; for undoubtedly many have erred grosly in those Things they have thought themselves Infallible; better it is to cleave to the clear and naked Truths of God alone, then to follow the Doctrines of the most learned and eminent Professors in the World, when they *hold* not *the Truth as it is in Jesus.*

Answ. 7. Reproach not this Doctrine, saying, *It is New and Strange*, or that *thou never heardst it so before*; for this discovers thy *Ignorance* rather then my *Error*: and that which at present seems to thee to be a *New Error*, being rightly examin'd by the *Scripture*, will prove an *Old Truth*: If therefore thou wilt needs reject whatsoever savours of *Novelty*, how shall the *Truths we yet know* not be brought in, and the *Ignorance* which yet remains be purg'd out?

Answ. 8. This is the same Doctrine which was preach'd by our blessed *Saviour*, and his holy *Prophets* & *Apostles* since the World began, and which was believ'd and obey'd by all the faithful Saints and Servants of God since the Creation; the same which the Lord gave in Charge to the *Israelites* by the Mouth of *Moses*, saying, *Behold, I send my Angel before thee to keep thee in the Way, and to bring thee into the Place which I have prepared,* Exod. 23. 20. *Beware of him and obey his Voice; provoak him not, for he will not pardon your Transgressions, for my Name is in him; but if thou shalt indeed obey his Voice, and do all that I speak, then will I be an Enemy to thy Enemies, and an Adversary to thy Adversaries.* Numb. 15. 30. *But the Soul that doth ought presumtuously, reproacheth the Lord, and shall be cut off from his People; because he despised the Word of the Lord.* Now what is this Word of the Lord?

It is not the Scriptures; for there were no *Bibles* many Years after that time, but the LIGT WITHIN. *It is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off; but the Word is very nigh unto thee, even in thy Heart & in thy Mouth, that thou ſhouldſt hear it and do it*: Wherefore *David* affifirmeth, that *if a Young man take heed to this Word, he ſhall cleanſe his Wayes thereby*; and calls it *a Lamp to his Feet, and a Light to his Paths*. This is alſo teſtified by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, *Thou ſhalt hear a Word behind thee, ſaying, This is the Way, walk in it; in which Path the wayfaring Men, though Fools, cannot err*. And our bleſſed Saviour doth confirm this Doctrine, ſaying, *Seek firſt the Kingdom of God and his Righteouſneſs*; which *Kingdom* he told the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, was *within* them. Thus *Peter* preacht *Chriſt* the Light; *For* Moſes *truly ſaid unto the Fathers, A Prophet ſhall the Lord your God raiſe up unto you, him ſhall you hear in all things; and it ſhall come to paſs, that every Soul that heareth not that Prophet, ſhall be cut off, &c.* Wherefore unto you firſt God having raiſed up his Son *Jeſus*, ſent him to bleſs you in turning every one of you from his Iniquities; and thus *Paul* was ſent, *To turn men from Darkneſs to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God*. Now, is not this *Darkneſs* within, and the *Light* within? And is it not an *inward* Turning, *To ſeek the Lord, if happily they might feel after him and find him; though he be not far from every one of us*? And doth not *James* turn men to the *Light within*, writing to Sinners, *Such as were in Filthineſs and ſuperfluity of Naughtineſs*? Doth not he bid them *receive with Meekneſs the ingrafted Word, which was able to ſave their Souls*; which *Peter* calleth the *ſure Word of Prophecy, unto which ye do well to give heed as vnto a Light that ſhineth in a dark Place*? But moſt take the *Word* for the *Scriptures*; but we know no *Word* but *Chriſt Jeſus*, the *Light*, and *his Name* only *is call'd the Word of God*: Therefore, *ſay not in thy Heart, who ſhall bring and reveal Chriſt unto us? for the Word is nigh thee, even in thy Heart and in thy Mouth*: Now this *Word* is *Chriſt, the true Light in every man*; wherefore ſaith our Lord Jeſus, *While ye have the Light believe in the Light, that ye may be the Children*

Deut. 30. 11. to 14.
Pſal. 119. 9. 105.
Iſa. 30. 21.
Mat. 6. 35.
Lu. 17. 21.
Acts 3. 22. vſ. 23, 26.
Acts 26. 18.
Acts 17. 27.
Jam. 1. 21.
2 Pet. 1. 19.
Joh. 12. 36.

of

of the Light; As, *Abel* being guided by this Light, *through Faith was enabled to offer up a more acceptable Sacrifice then Cain*: In Obedience to this Enoch *walked with, and pleased God*: By this Noah *being warned, moved with Fear, prepared an Ark for the saving of his House*: By this *was* Abraham *called to leave his own Country and his Father's House*; and in Obedience to this *he departed, not knowing whether he went*: *Joseph* being guided by this, withstood the Temptations of his *Mrs*, though enforced with Importunity, Pleasure, Profit & Secresie: Hereby Moses *chose rather to suffer Affliction with the People of God, then to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season, esteeming the Reproach of Christ greater Riches then the Treasures of* Egypt, *and endured, as seeing him that is Invisible. And what shall I say more? for the Time would fail to tell of* Gideon, Barak, Sampson, Jepthah, David, Samuel, *and of the Prophets, who by Faith*, and Obedience to the Light, *subdued Kingdoms, wrought Righteousness, obtained Promises, stopped the Mouths of Lyons, quenched the Violence of Fire: Some were tortured, not accepting Deliverance: Others had Tryal of cruel Mockings, Scourgings, Bonds, and Imprisonment, and Death.* And is still the same at this Day; for the *Light within* is the true Shepherd's Voice, which all the Lambs of Christ hear, obey and follow, to the Hazard of all that is dear to them.

Object. 2. *But thou denyest the Scriptures to be the Word of God, which is the Only Rule to judge of Doctrines, and a sure Weapon to resist Satan, and confute his Ministers; for it is very observable that Christ made Use of no other Means to overcome the Tempter, but Only the Scriptures, which are the Sword of the Spirit and the Word of God.*

Answ. 1 Plainly, I deny the Scriptures are either the Sword of the Spirit, or the Word of God: That the Word of God is the Sword of the Spirit, I own, and witness that it is sharper then a Two-edg'd Sword, like a Hammer and a Fire, the Ax at the Root of every corrupt Tree, and so are not the Scriptures; yea, the Word of the Lord is Unchangeable, Incorruptible and Eternal, without Beginning of Dayes, or End of Time; and so are not the Scriptures.

Answ. 2. Nevertheless, we prefer the Holy Scriptures as they were

were given forth by the Holy Spirit of God, and believe them to be a true Declaration of God and of his Word.

Answ. 3. Yet do we prefer Christ Jesus the Light, above the Scriptures; for in all Things he must have the Preheminence; therefore saith *John* the *Baptist*, *I prefer him before me, for he is before me*, though in Appearance *John* was seemingly before Christ; *Before* Abraham *was, I am*, said he: Wherefore know that we build not upon the Holy Prophets and Blessed Apostles, their Words, Works, Writings and Experiences; but we are built upon the Foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the Foundation and the chief Corner-Stone; so that we have not received our Light, Life, Peace, Comfort, Faith, Hope and Assurance from the Writings of the Saints, but from him that was their Light, Life, Hope, Root and Foundation, and have our Teaching from that Light, whereby *Abel*, *Enoch*, *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, *Jacob* and *Joseph* walked with and pleased God, long before any Scriptural-Rules were manifested.

Answ. 4. Neither are the Scriptures the only Rule to judge of Doctrines; for we know the Scriptures are hard to be understood; and therefore Men in their carnal Wisdom are putting their several Meanings upon one and the same Scripture; wherefore we say, the Spirit of God is the only Judge of Doctrines, because he alone that gave forth knows the Meanings of Scriptures; 1 Cor. 2. 10. *For the Spirit searcheth all Things; yea, the Deep Things of God.*

Answ. 5. Nor yet do I believe that the Scriptures were the only Means which Christ made Use of to overcome and repel the Tempter in the Wilderness; for we observe, Satan pleaded Scripture as well as Christ, till he took indeed the Sword of the Spirit, which is his Divine *Power*, and commanded him, saying, *Get thee behind me Satan*; then the Devil left him, but not before he was thus expelled.

Object. 3. *But this Doctrine of the Light within is opposed by all the able learned Divines* (so call'd) *in the Nation; yea, the most eminent Preachers amongst the* Presbyters, Independents *and* Baptists, *do condemn it for Erroneous and Diveliſh Deluſion.*

Answ. 1. It's true, this Doctrine hath been and is a Stone of Stumbling

Stumbling, & a Rock of Offence unto all Sorts & Forms of Profeſſors in the World; eſpecially, the *Prieſts & Preachers* are moſt inveterately incenſed againſt it, becauſe the Craft by which they have gotten great Gain, is hereby eſpecially impared; nevertheleſs, the Gates of Hell ſhall never prevail againſt it: the Truth is ſtrong and will prevail, yea, it doth and will flouriſh in Deſpight of all the Scorns, Injuries, Oppoſition and Villany of the World.

Anſw. 2. The Scriptures are plain, that *God hath hid theſe Things from the Wiſe and Prudent* in the World, *and hath revealed them unto Babes: Behold therefore ye Deſpiſers and wonder; for this is the Work which God hath wrought in your Day, which ye will not believe, though it be declared unto you.*

Anſw. 3. And as for thoſe Preachers among the *Presbyters*, &c. who oppoſe this Doctrine, this I affirm, and teſtifie againſt them, though they come in Sheeps Cloathing (that is) have gotten a more refined Way of Profeſſion then others, and cover themſelves with the Words of the Prophets and Apoſtles, yet inwardly are they Ravening Wolves; they are inwardly Ravened from the Light and Life of thoſe Saints, whoſe Words they have taken up; yea, it is an eaſie Thing to prove againſt the beſt of them, that they live in Sin and plead for it.

Anſw. 4. Whoever deny, reproach and oppoſe this Doctrine, are none of Chriſt's Miniſters, as will appear from a due Examination of their Call, Doctrine and Practice: Who ſent them? God or Man? What do they preach? the Word of God, or the Words of Men? Is their Life and Converſation Humble, Meek, Self-denying and Heavenly? Or is it not Proud, Fierce, Self-ſeeking and Worldly? Now our Lord Jeſus hath left upon Record one Infallible Rule, whereby we may know which are true Goſpel-Miniſters, and which are not: and as it is granted, that Chriſt was a true Goſpel-Miniſter; ſo it is expected, that all Goſpel-Miniſters be like him in their Meaſure; for ſaith Chriſt to his Father, *As thou ſent me into the World, ſo have I ſent them into the World*, Joh. 17. And when he ſent forth his Diſciples, to them he ſaith, *As the Father ſent me, even ſo ſend I you.* Hereby then it will eaſily be diſcerned, that theſe Preachers, who ſo bitterly Rage and Rail againſt the *Light within*, are never an one of them Chriſt's Miniſters, but Idol-Shepherds, Lyars and Falſe Prophets.

Qualif.

Qualification 1. Chriſt was the Son of God, and known to be ſo before he undertook or exerciſed in the Miniſtry, for the Lord foreſeing what after came to paſs by Peoples running into ſeveral Opinions and Doctrines of men, gave this Charge and Teſtimony from Heaven, ſaying, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleaſed, hear him*: In like manner every true Believer is a *Son of God*, generated of the immortal Seed, born anew by the Operation of the Spirit, made a real Partaker of the Divine Nature, liveth in and hath Union with God through Faith in Chriſt; for *to as many as receive him he giveth Power to become the Sons of God.*

Qualif. 2. He was immeaſurably anointed with the Spirit, and was known to be ſo; for ſaith *John*, *He that ſent me to baptize, the ſame ſaid unto me, On whomſoever thou ſhalt ſee the Spirit deſcending and remaining, the ſame is he*; So may true *Goſpel-Miniſters* be known, for they are as really anointed with the Holy Spirit of God, as Chriſt was, though not ſo equally; yea every believing Soul is indued with this Spirit; theſe are the Anointed ones of the Lord; and whoever want this Spirit, *they are none of his*: And as Chriſt commanded his Diſciples *to abide at* Jeruſalem *till they had received this Unction*; ſo whoever undertake to preach before they have receiv'd this Power from the Lord, they Run and he ſent them not.

Qualif. 3. He endured and conquered the Aſſaults and Temptations of Satan in the Wilderneſs, by virtue of his Sonſhip and Unction, before he was ever known to preach the Goſpel; in like manner all the true Children of God are taken into Fellowſhip with Chriſt in his Tryals, Temptations and Sufferings; but eſpecially ſuch as have been call'd unto more eminent & publick Work, have met with greateſt Conflicts, Wraſtlings and Temptations, that they might be kept humble before the Lord, and alſo be fitly diſpoſed to ſpeak a Word in due ſeaſon for the Relief of ſuch as are brought under the ſame Trouble.

Qualif. 4. In the Power, Virtue and Strength of his Son-ſhip, Unction and Conqueſt, he went out and preached the Goſpel, that is, proclaimed Glad Tidings of the Grace and Good-will of God to the Poor, and preached Peace to the Broken-hearted, teſtifying the Love of God to Mankind, in ſending his Son to them to open their Blind Eyes, and recover them out of the Snare of the Devil;

exhorting

exhorting Men to believe in the Light, leſt Eternal Darkneſs come upon them. And all that was done in his Miniſtry, was not from any outward Encouragement or Reward, but moved only hereunto from the Tenderneſs of his Pitty and Compaſſion to poor Sinners. So it is at this Day, all that are born of the Spirit are true Miniſters of the ſame Goſpel, and publiſh it freely in the Conſtrainings of the Love of God, which layes a Neceſſity upon them to miniſter freely without Expectation of Gifts and Rewards. But do they deſerve the Name of Goſpel-Miniſters, who preach another Doctrine then what Chriſt or his Apoſtles ever did, confidently affirming, *That the Doctrine of the Light within, or to ſay, the Light in every Man's Conſcience is the Light of Chriſt, this is Blaſphemy; but tell Men, that Light which doth convince them of Sin is not the Light of Chriſt, but Natural Conſcience, and therefore not able to ſanctifie and ſave ſuch as believe in it and obey it?* and yet they ſay, *There be ſome whom they call Saints and Believers, in whom there is true Saving Light; but as for the greateſt Part of the World, they are altogether deſtitute hereof*: and yet though they make a ſeeming Diſtinction between Saints and Sinners, yet they themſelves confeſs *they are Sinners*; yea, and believe *that they muſt be ſo while they breath upon Earth*: And thus are People held in Ignorance, Unbelief and Confuſion, their blind Guides having cauſed them to err from the Truth; for verely this hath been and is the Doctrine of theſe eminent Men.

Qualif. 5. That Goſpel which Jeſus Chriſt had preached, and witneſſed to in his holy Life, he confirmed and ſeal'd by his Death in his Blood: Now this Laſt is that which crowned and compleated his Miniſtry; and the ſame Spirit is in all the Faithful at this day, whereby Chriſt's Miniſters are enabled to declare the Truth in the Life and Power of the Eternal Word, without the Help and Aſſiſtance of acquired Parts, Arts and Studies; for to ſuch ſaith Chriſt, *It is not you that ſpeak, but the Spirit which ſpeaketh in you*; and thus declaring what they have ſeen, taſted and handled of the Word of Life, they are not aſhamed of their Work, nor afraid of Men; neither will they conceal their Meetings in Time of greateſt Danger, nor ſlip out at Back-Doors to avoid Sufferings; but are in a continual Readineſs and Preparedneſs to forſake all that is dear to them, rather then to turn their Backs upon the Work of God, or in the leaſt to

prove Unfaithful by Denying or Betraying the Truths of Christ: Wherefore now consider these things all ye *Admirers of Men*, and give place to the *Witness of God in your own Consciences*, and see if one of your Gifted Brethren, Pastors and Teachers be thus qualified.

Object. 4. *But the Scriptures are very plain, that Unbelievers and Reprobates are without Christ, as in* Ephes. 2. 12. *and* 2 Cor. 13 5. *wherefore though we do believe, that Christ is in every Believer, yet we cannot understand that the Light in every Man is the Light of Christ.*

Answ. 1. Indeed one of these Scriptures at first Appearance, seems to contradict all that hath been said before, it will be therefore necessary to speak to them severally. That in *Ephes.* 2. 12. plainly affirms, That before Conversion *they were without God, and without Christ in the World*: And truly, I can witness this Scripture fulfilled in my own Particular; for I know the Time when I was without Christ, and without God in the World, when I lived in Sinful Pleasures and Delights, fulfilling the Lusts of the Flesh with Greediness; I lived then as if there was no God in the World, yea, without any awful Respect to the Eye of God and Christ; And yet I can as truly affirm, that at that Time the Light of Christ was in me testifying against my Iniquity: And this may seem a Mystery that a Measure of his Light should be within a Man, when that Man is without Christ; yet I have experienced the Truth hereof, and therefore testifie, that its one Thing for the Light of Christ to be in a Man, and another Thing for a Man to be in the Light of Christ; and thus it is, the Light of Christ may be in a Man, and yet that Man out of the Light of Christ; whereupon I affirm and declare, that the Light of Christ is in every Man; but no Man is in Christ till he be a new Creature.

And as to that other Scripture, 2 *Cor.* 13. 5. *Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be Reprobates.* This Place doth not at all oppose what before hath been written, if it be seriously considered, but doth greatly confirm the Truth of this Doctrine: If therefore by *Reprobates* be intended such as have sinned out the Day of Grace, and done Despight to the Strivings of the Spirit of God, as the old World did; yea, and as those eminent Professors whom *Stephen* reproveth, saying, *Ye stiff-necked*

and

and uncircumcised in Heart and Ears, ye do alwayes resist the Holy Ghost; as your Fathers did, so do ye, Acts 7. 51.

And as *Jerusalem,* which remained Impenitent in the Day of Visitation, till the Things of her Peace were hid from her Eyes, *Luke* 19.42. And as those Guests *which had been often invited, and yet refused to come,* making light of those many renew'd and reiterated Tenders of Grace, *entreating the Messengers spightfully and slew them, wherefore the King was wroth, and protested against them, that none of those Murtherers should taste of his Supper,* Mat. 22. Or like that *Fig-Tree, which the Master of the Vineyard when he had come three Years expecting Fruit and found none, required the Dresser to cut it down and cast it into the Fire,* Luke 13. 7. And like *those, who had tasted of the Heavenly Gift, and of the Good Word of God, and of the Powers of the World to come; but after to fall away, and crucifie to themselves the Son of God afresh, & put him to open Shame; these bringing forth Thorns & Bryars are rejected, and are nigh unto Cursing, whose End is to be burned,* Heb. 6.7,8. And such as the Lord complaineth of by the Prophet *Jeremiah,* saying, *They are all grievous Revolters, walking with Slanders; they are Brass and Iron, they are all Corrupters, the Bellows are burnt, the Lead is consumed of the Fire, the Founder melteth in Vain, for the Wicked are not plucked away; Reprobate Silver shall Men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them,* Jer. 6. 29. And the Spirit speaketh expresly, that some *shall depart from the Faith, giving heed to seducing Spirits and Doctrines of Devils, speaking Lyes in Hypocrisie, having their Conscience seared with an Hot Iron, and so are past feeling,* 1 Tim 4.2. Now if *Reprobates* be taken in this Place for such as God hath given up, cast off and rejected, yet doth not this prove but the Light of Christ was once in them, and at Work in their Hearts: And further, by this Scripture it is manifest, that the Light of Christ Jesus is in every Man; And this I know, will suffice in Answer to satisfie the Unprejudiced concerning those Places of Scripture.

Answ. 2. The Love of Christ constraineth us thus to Judge, because if Christ dyed for all, then were all Dead; and as Christ dyed for all, so hath this Grace appeared to all; for he hath enlightned all that come into the World, and we know that he is able and willing to save all that yield Obedience to, and embrace the Tenders of his Boundless, Endless; Unlimited, Universal Love to Mankind

without Exception; and this we are verily perſwaded of from theſe and ſuch like Conſiderations:

1. Becauſe *God is no Reſpecter of Perſons*, Acts 10. 35. *He maketh his Sun to riſe on the Evil and the Good, and ſendeth Rain on the Juſt and on the Unjuſt; he accepteth not the Perſons of Princes, nor regardeth the Rich more then the Poor; for they all are the Work of his Hands.*

2. Becauſe that Light which ſhined in our Dark, Ignorant, Unclean and Unbelieving Hearts before Converſion, is the very ſame in which we live and abide ſince our Converſion: That which formerly ſtood by, was an Eye witneſs to, and bore a faithful Teſtimony againſt us while we walked in Darkneſs, is the ſame which ſince the time of our believing and abiding in his Light witneſſeth with our Spirits that we are the *Children of God*: That which cauſed Trouble, Reſtleſneſs and Terror, when we lived in Unbelief, Rebellion and Diſobedience, is the ſame which cauſeth Calmneſs, Stilneſs, Settlement and Satisfaction, and bringeth forth peaceable Fruits of Righteouſneſs in our Souls, ſince we have believed & continued obedient thereto: That very *Light* which before convinced, reproved, judged & condemned us for all Unbelief and Unrighteouſneſs both in Heart & Life, is ſtill the ſame which doth convert, confirm, cleanſe, juſtifie and ſave; yea, that Light which before ſhined in Darkneſs, and the Darkneſs comprehended it not, is but one and the ſame, which after it was believed and obeyed, did expel and lead out of Darkneſs, that the Light which before was eccliplſed, may now ſo ſhine before Men, that ſeeing our Good Works, may glorifie our Father which is in Heaven, in the Day of their Viſitation: wherefore the Love of Chriſt conſtrains us thus to judge, that the Light of Chriſt is in every Man and Woman, who is able to ſave to the uttermoſt all that believe in him and obey him; becauſe when we were as Vile as the worſt of Sinners, we can witneſs that the ſame Light, which did then ſhine in Darkneſs, doth now, to the Praiſe of God, ſhine out of Darkneſs, whereof we are not aſhamed.

3. Becauſe our Lord Jeſus, who cannot Lye, hath ſaid, that man's Condemnation ariſeth only from the Contempt of and Diſobedience to this Light, ſaying, *This is the Condemnation, Light is come into the World, but men love Darkneſs rather then Light*, Jo. 3.

This

This is (the) the Condemnation that Light is come into the World. That was only, ſay ſome, *Chriſt's Bodily Preſence upon Earth in that Day*; So then it muſt needs follow, that Condemnation terminated and ended in that Generation, becauſe then that Bodily Preſence expired: But we witneſs according to his own Words, that he is come again in Spirit; for (ſaith he) *They ſhall ſay, Lo here, and Lo there; but go not after them, nor follow them; look not out, for the Kingdom of God is within you: And as the Lightning ſhineth from one Part under Heaven to the other Part under Heaven, ſo ſhall the Son of Man be in his Day; but firſt he muſt ſuffer many Things of this Generation, and be rejected*: We teſtifie therefore, that theſe are the Dayes of the Son of Man; and Chriſt Jeſus the Light, is come into the World, into the Souls & Conſciences of Earthly, VVorldly-minded and Unbelieving Men and VVomen; and they who love Darkneſs rather then Light cannot eſcape Condemnation, becauſe they neglect deſpiſe and reject ſo great Salvation: Therefore as the *Brazen Serpent* was lift up by *Moſes* in the VVilderneſs, even ſo Chriſt Jeſus, the Light of the VVorld, hath God exalted with his own Right Hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give Repentance and Forgiveneſs; wherefore he ſaid, *When he aſcended on high, he led Captivity Captive, and gave Gifts unto Men; now that he aſcended, what is it but that he deſcended firſt into the lower Parts of the Earth; he that deſcended is the ſame alſo which aſcended far above all Heavens,* THAT HE MIGHT FILL ALL THINGS. And thus is his Light in every Man's Conſcience, that they who feel themſelves ſtung by the fiery Serpents in the Wilderneſs of Sin, Darkneſs and Unbelief, and look towards and believe in him, might not periſh, but have Eternal Life; but whoever neglect, overlook or undervalue this only Saviour of the VVorld, Chriſt Jeſus, the Light, the alone Guide to Reſt, muſt neceſſarily periſh in the VVilderneſs, and dye in their Sins. Luke 17. 21, 23, 24, 25.

For it is moſt certain, that Man's Damnation muſt undoubtedly ariſe from ſome of theſe Cauſes: (1.) *Either for want of Light*: Or (2.) *From the Deficiency of that Light*: Or (3.) *From man's own Rebellion and Diſobedience to this Light.*

Now to judge or believe that man's Condemnation is occaſion'd through the Want of True Saving Light, is horrid Wickedneſs,

becauſe it chargeth God fooliſhly with Injuſtice; and nothing leſs then to ſay with the Evil and Unprofitable Servant, *Lord, I know thee to be an Auſtere and Hard Man, reaping where thou haſt not ſown, and gathering where thou haſt not ſtrawed; therefore I was afraid, and went and hid thy Talent in the Earth*: Yea, what greater Unmercifulneſs and Injuſtice can be charged upon God, then to ſay or think, *That he hath deſigned any Man's Ruin, and hath denyed him the Benefit of this ſaving Light*? When the Lord hath aſſured Mankind as certainly as he lives, *That he deſires not the Death of any Sinner*; but that this is his Will, and herein he is pleaſed, *That the Wicked might forſake their Wicked Wayes, and live; for he would that all men ſhould be ſaved, and come to the Knowledge of the Truth, which Truth is Chriſt, the Light.*

Neither can it be granted that man's Condemnation is occaſioned through the Inſufficiency of this Light of Chriſt; for, as hath been already proved, *He is able to ſave to the uttermoſt all that come to the Father by him, and is the Mighty Power of God unto Salvation*; which though in its firſt Appearance be as ſmall as a Grain of Muſtard-ſeed, a Little Leaven, a Bruiſed Reed, or as Smoaking Flax, yet is it that Little Stone, cut out of the Mountains without Hands; yea, though it be rejected, diſallowed, ſet at nought, refuſed and Deſpiſed by all *Babel's* Builders, as a Poor, Inconſiderable Matter: But though theſe *Phraſes* oppoſe the Appearance of Chriſt in Spirit, the Light, & deſpiſe him as the Day of ſmall Things, yet is it the only precious Stone, the tryed Stone, the Corner-ſtone, that ſure Foundation and Rock of Ages, that whoſoever believe and build hereon, the Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt them.

Wherefore ſeeing that Light is come into the World, and that the Light Chriſt Jeſus is ſufficient to redeem & ſave all that believe in and obey him; and that Man's Condemnation proceeds only from Diſobedience and Unbelief, in rejecting the Light: It is therefore the earneſt Travail of my Soul, That you, my dear and truly beloved Friends and Relations, may turn in, to the Light in your own Conſciences; retire thither, and wait in the Silence of your own Wills and Wiſdom, for the clear Manifeſtations thereof, then ſhall you know him whom all the World talks of, and need no more that any ſay, *Know the Lord*; for he will reveal himſelf in you: Wherefore as ye love your own Souls, love and cherriſh that

in you, which hath ſhewn you the Evil of Sin, the Vanity of this Fading World, and hath been at Work many a time in your Hearts and wrought you into Tenderneſs, panting after Satisfaction from the Living Preſence of God: Oh! Love, believe only in him, hearken only to him, wait continually upon him, obey, follow and live in his Counſels; fall under his Reproofs with Meekneſs, endure his Judgment with Patience, kiſs the Son leſt he be angry, and ye periſh in the Way; chearfully reſign up your Wills, Affections, Souls, Bodies, Pleaſures, Profits, Honours, Eſtates, Liberty and Life it ſelf, to be univerſally ordered and diſpoſed by him, whoſe Name is Wonderful Counſellor, the Mighty God, the Everlaſting Father, the Prince of Peace. This is the Way to True Honour and Durable Riches: Oh therefore be perſwaded to ſtand ſingle in the Teachings, Guidance and Counſels of the Lord Jeſus; Deſpiſe him not; be not aſhamed to own him and his poor Deſpiſed Followers.

Now, that your Hearts may be carryed above the Snares that attend your Conditions, and be wholely devoted to the Lord, and become Fellow Citizens with the Saints in Light, is the earneſt Breathing and Prayer of him, who is

Your Faithful Friend,

James Jackſon.

Poſtſcript.

Reader,

HAving mentioned ſome things before in general, of the Juſt Cauſe of my leaving the *Independent* People, I think it not unſeaſonable to give this particular Account of an Offence receiv'd from the Uneven Walking of *John James*, Paſtor of the *Independents* in *Nottinghamſhire*, which I ſignified to him before my Forſaking that Way, a Copy whereof followeth, which to this Day ſtands over his Head; for he never returned me an Anſwer to my Letter, but ſtirred up and incenſed my Relations and others againſt me, telling them how greatly I had Injured, Abuſed and Slandered him: *But Wiſdom is juſtified of her Children.*

John James,

THE Lord knows, and thou art not wholely Ignorant, That ſome years lately paſt my Soul was plunged into a moſt Dreadful State; yea, and I certainly know, that unleſs the moſt precious Sons of Sion *be kept by the Mighty Power of God, and in themſelves carefully obſerve the firſt Declinings of their Hearts from the Lord, they will be enſnared through the Deceitfulneſs of Sin, and become weak as other Men: And conſider, as thou art in great Danger to be ruin'd, through the Indulgence and Flatteries of thy Brethren (ſome of them ſtyling thee,* The Head of the Church, next and immediately under Chriſt) *and leſt thou ſhou'dſt receive Harm for want of Faithfulneſs in Friends watching over thee in Love, I have in Love to thy Soul, and Diſcharge of my Duty, preſented to thy ſerious Conſideration ſome of the things I hear of thee, and partly believe them.*

Whereas

Whereas heretofore thou uſedſt to preach againſt National Churches, Antichriſt's Clergy, their Covetouſneſs, Pride, Forced Maintenance, &c. and reprovedſt thy Brethren for hearing thoſe Pariſh Prieſts, with whom now thou art joyned in Combination, to augment thy Eccleſiaſtical Promotions, which before was more Conſiderable then many Parſonages in the County; and ſo thou art leading back again, licking up thy old Vomit; and of late haſt begun in ſeveral Places to Sprinkle Infants.

That many of thy Poor Brethren, at whoſe Houſes formerly thou kept'ſt Meetings, have now been neglected for above Six Years; but haſt been ever careful to viſit thy kind Benefactors at *Marnham*, *Skegby*, *&c.* and very punctual to keep thy Day with the *Presbyterians* at *Nottingham* and *Cheſterfield*, where thou kneweſt thy Pay would be ſweet and certain.

It was thee only, that after that great Aſſembly was gathered at *Gamſton* by the Labours of ſome private Men, who confined the Work there to a Pack of Clergy-Men, *viz.* Thy ſelf, *Roſſe*, *Boſworth* and *Clark*; And by the ſame Spirit, and Prelatical Preheminence ſuſpended old *Allen* (a more Righteous Man then thy ſelf) from Exerciſing in thy Dioces.

It was the Letter writ with thy own Hand, that obſtructed the intended Marriage betwixt *John Atkinſon* and *Mary Smith*; for although ſeemingly thou pretendedſt Kindneſs to the ſaid *John*, who indeed at the ſame time was in Fellowſhip with thee, yet having Reſpect to a more peculiar Intereſt, ſecretly writ to *Northampton*, and fruſtratedſt the Hopes of the poor Man, which he never Recovered, but Languiſhed and Dyed.

And when a Letter waswritten to be ſent to *London*, to the Profeſſors there, on the behalf of *Robert Johnſon*, a Member of thy Church, to procure his Relief, he being there and Unknown, was exceedingly Diſtreſſed for want of Bread; thou didſt refuſe to ſubſcribe the Letter, and he was Famiſhed and Dyed

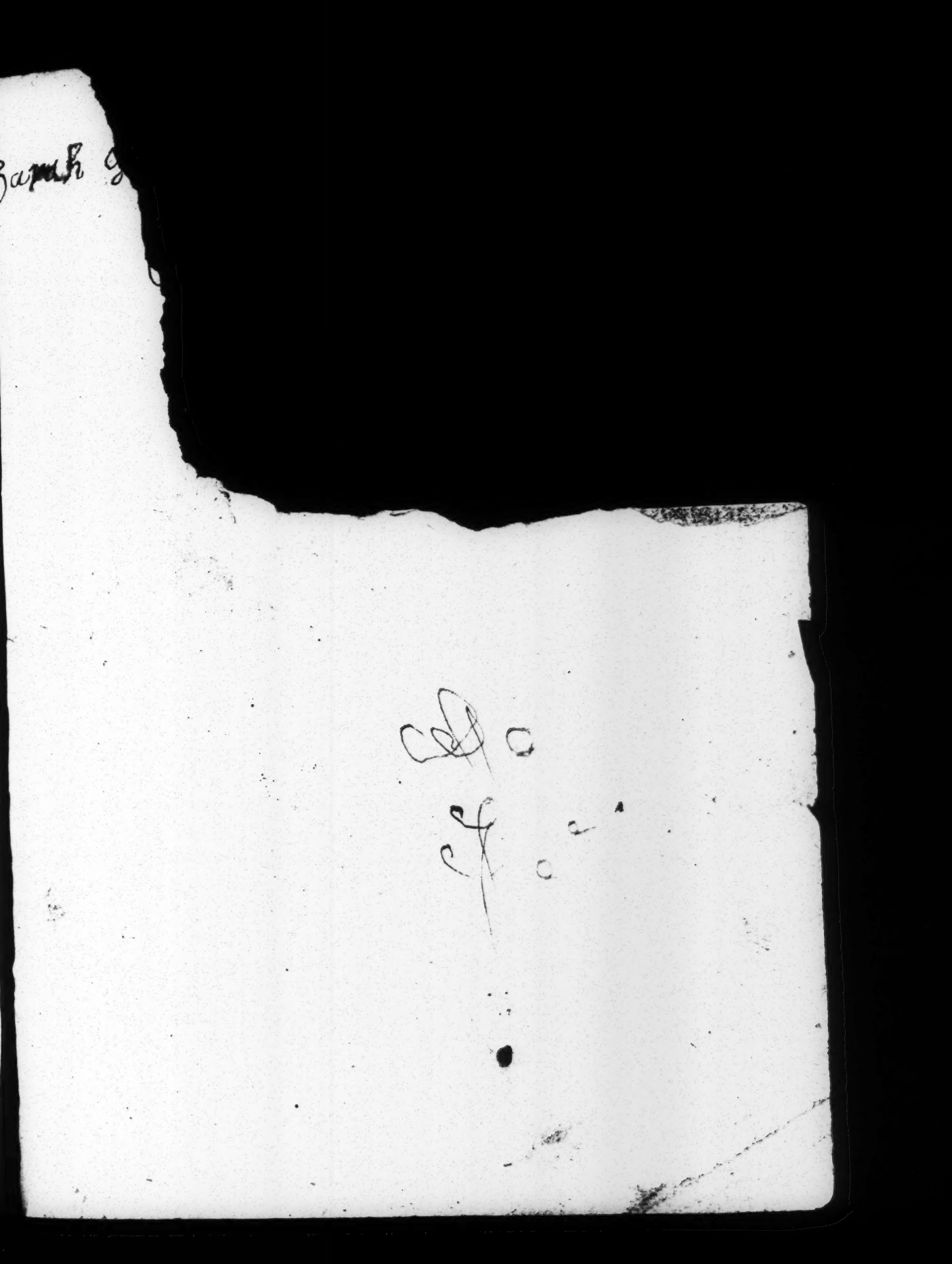
ed before that Money got to [illegible] which was collected at Not-
tingham.

*By which it doth appear, that thou hast [illegible] that Honest Conscien-
tious Tenderness which once thou [illegible] to have, and that the
Spirit of God is not thy Guide and [illegible] for it hath been seriously
observed by thy most Judicio[illegible] that thou dost not bear in
thine Assemblies a Faithful [illegible] against the Formality, Earth-
linesse, Pride, Bitterness a[illegible] compliances of thine Auditors;
but daubest with Untem[illegible], and preachest smooth things,
Flourishes, Latin and [illegible]ces, and Eloquent Phrases, to
set off and beautifie th[illegible]*

*Remember whenc[illegible] and Repent; else know for cer-
tain, thou hast done [illegible] and the Lord will make no more Use
of thee; If Salt hath [illegible]vour, it is henceforth good for nothing.*

I am thine Offended Friend,

Kneesal, 9th Mon. 1669.

James Jackson.

THE END.